Black Bean Sweetcorn Cornbread Bake

1 square 8 in (20 cm) bake, 4 main-dish portions · Active 20 min · Total 1 hr 15 min

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp (15 ml) neutral oil for filling, plus 1 tbsp (15 ml) for batter
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped, about 1 cup (150 g)
- 1 can cooked black beans, 15 oz (425 g) net, drained and rinsed, about 1½ cups (240 g) drained
- 1 can chopped tomatoes, 14½ oz (400–411 g), including juice
- 1 small can sweetcorn, about 7 oz (200 g) net, drained to about ¾ cup (120 g)
- 1 tsp mild chili powder or sweet paprika
- ½ tsp ground cumin, optional
- ¼ tsp (1.5 g) fine salt for filling, only if needed
- ½ cup (75 g) plain fine yellow cornmeal
- ½ cup (65 g) all-purpose flour
- 1½ tsp (6 g) baking powder
- ¼ tsp (1.5 g) fine salt for batter
- 1 large egg
- ½ cup (120 ml) milk, or milk powder reconstituted according to its package and then measured

Set out

Oven, 8 in (20 cm) square baking dish, at least 2 qt (1.9 L) capacity, Large skillet, Mixing bowl, Whisk, Spoon, Measuring jug, Food thermometer, Clean skewer or cake tester, Foil, if the topping needs covering

Allergens

Wheat, Egg, Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Heat the oven to 400°F (200°C). Heat 1 tbsp oil in the skillet over medium heat. Cook the onion 8–10 minutes until softened. Stir in the chili powder and cumin if using and cook 30 seconds.

2. Add the drained beans, tomatoes with juice and drained sweetcorn. Simmer uncovered 10–12 minutes, stirring, until thick rather than soupy. Mash about ¼ cup of the beans against the pan and stir them in. Taste the cooked filling and add up to ¼ tsp salt only if needed.

3. While the filling simmers, stir the cornmeal, flour, baking powder and batter salt together in a bowl. In a jug, beat the egg with the milk and remaining 1 tbsp oil. Pour the wet mixture into the dry mixture and stir just until combined.

4. Spread the hot bean mixture in the baking dish. Spoon the batter over the top and spread gently in a thin even layer. Bake 22–28 minutes, until the topping is golden, a clean skewer from its center has no wet batter and the casserole filling reaches 165°F (74°C). If the topping browns before it sets, loosely cover with foil and continue.

5. Rest 5 minutes before dividing into 4 portions. Serve the cornmeal topping with the bean filling underneath.

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What this needs beyond the cupboard

An oven, a suitable baking dish, one egg and milk with a safe cold-storage route are required. Reconstituted milk is perishable. If those are unavailable, choose a no-egg skillet bean recipe rather than leaving them out of this topping and expecting the same result.

Ingredient labels

Check cornmeal and spice blend labels and the milk powder ingredients. A complete cornbread mix may contain additional allergens and cannot replace these dry ingredients without reformulating the batter.

A useful detail

The 75 minute total includes onion preparation, a hot filling, topping preparation during the simmer, up to 28 minutes baking and a short rest. The base is mildly seasoned; add hot sauce at the table if available rather than making a whole pan too hot for someone sharing it.

Keep it well

Refrigerate in shallow covered containers within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C), at 40°F (4°C) or below. Divide into shallow portions and use within 3 days. Reheat portions to 165°F (74°C), adding a little water around the bean filling if it has thickened. Freeze promptly cooled portions for up to 2 months for quality; thaw in the refrigerator before reheating.